

## Competencies of an Educated Albertan

Governments, business leaders, researchers and communities in Alberta, Canada, and around the world, investigating the requirements of 21<sup>st</sup> century learners, have identified the need for competencies to be more central in the education of young people if they are to be active participants in an increasingly knowledge-based and globalized society. Competencies enable students to understand their world, engage fully in their education, relate well to others, manage their lives wisely, and contribute positively to their communities.

Competencies transcend subject areas and are developed through learning approaches that include subject/discipline-specific learning outcomes. A competencies-based, student-focused curriculum requires the attainment of attitudes, skills and knowledge as well as values for living, learning and working. Students are engaged thinkers, demonstrate ethical citizenship, and develop their entrepreneurial spirit.

## Curriculum

Curriculum is a widely used term, which has many interpretations. For the purposes of the dialogue for transformational change in Alberta's education system, curriculum is defined as having the following interconnected components: programs of study, balanced assessment, and learning and teaching resources. Curriculum is foundational to students' learning experiences. Alberta students are engaged in activities that are guided by the outcomes in the provincial programs of study, supported by balanced assessment tools, and learning and teaching resources.

### Curriculum: Programs of Study

#### ***What it is***

Programs of study set provincial standards for students. It is important for students to know and understand what is expected of them and apply what they've learned to other contexts. It is critical for students to know how they are progressing in their learning and what they need to do to achieve success.

#### ***What it means***

The transformation of programs of study means:

- building on Alberta's accomplishments, Alberta's programs of study emphasize the development of competencies, based on a solid foundation of attitudes, skills and knowledge as well as values developed through in-depth study of concepts within subject/discipline areas.
- students have the opportunity to develop in-depth knowledge and understanding while also exploring their interests and passions.
- that by reducing the scope of provincially mandated programs of study, there is enhanced flexibility in meeting students' needs by enabling learning opportunities designed at the local level.

#### ***How it could be achieved***

This policy direction towards learning that is more competency-based will require a redesign of the focus and content of the province's programs of study, and how they are developed. This will include revising programs of study to provide opportunities for students to explore concepts in more depth while reducing the breadth of content. This will also include a more consistent focus on competencies across the programs of study. Building on Alberta's successes, there will be an increased focus on authentic learning opportunities within relevant contexts. The processes and standards for development of programs of study will be enhanced to engage a broader range of stakeholders and partners and reflect 21<sup>st</sup> century technologies.